Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VALLET 00230 151606Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 EB-08 TRSE-00 AID-05 OMB-01 /085 W
----------025040 160525Z /13
R 151548Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7969
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USNATO
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 00230

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MT
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF ON MALTESE FOREIGN POLICY

REF: VALLETTA 0149

1. ON FEBRUARY 14 PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF DEFENDED HIS GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY DURING A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE 1977/78 BUDGET. A SUMMARY OF HIS BASIC POINTS AS REPORTED IN THE LOCAL MEDIA FOLLOW:

(A) IN RESPONSE TO OPPOSITION CRITICISM THAT "MALTA'S PATH" AFTER MARCH 1979 WAS STILL NOT DEFINED, MINTOFF ASSERTED THAT IF MALTA WANTED TO KEEP ITS INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY ITS OPTIONS SHOULD BE KEPT OPEN NOT ONLY TO 1979 BUT THEREAFTER AS WELL. HISTORICALLY, MALTA HAS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VALLET 00230 151606Z

ALWAYS BEEN UNDER THE CONTROL OF SOME GREAT POWER, THE MOST RECENT BEING BRITAIN. AS A RESULT, ALTHOUGH THE BRITISH PROMISED "EVERYTHING" MALTA WAS NEVERTHELESS "THE LAST COLONY IN EUROPE TO BE FREE AND NOT THE FIRST BRITISH COLONY TO BECOME INDEPENDENT." THEREFORE, MALTA SHOULD HAVE ALTERNATIVES AND WILL NOT CHOOSE ITS "PATH" UNTIL 1979 COMES AND EVEN THEN MALTA COULD SUBSEQUENTLY CHANGE

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

HER CHOSEN ROUTE.
(B) AFTER REVIEWING THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS FOR EUROPEAN AND ARAB GUARANTEES FOR MALTA'S NEUTRALITY AND NON-ALIGNMENT AS WELL AS ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR TRANS-FORMING MALTA'S ECONOMY, MINTOFF REITERATED THAT MALTA HAS RECEIVED "UNEQUIVOCAL DECLARATIONS TO THIS EFFECT" ONLY FROM THE ARAB STATES AND NO SUCH DECLARATION HAS BEEN GIVEN BY EUROPEANS STATES. THE REASON THE EUROPEANS HAVE NOT PROVIDED SUCH A DECLARATION IS NOT BECUASE THEY WANT MALTA TO JOIN THE SOVIET CAMP -- "THE WEST WILL ATTACK MALTA IF MALTA DECIDES TO DO SO" -- BUT RATHER BECAUSE MOST WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES STILL HOPE THAT MALTA DOES NOT REALLY WANT TO RID ITSELF OF THE MILITARY BASE BY MARCH, 1979. EUROPEAN NATIONS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BELIEVE THIS BY THE OPPOSITION AND THE TIMES OF MALTA, "A PAPER OWNED BY PEOPLE WHO WERE NOT MALTESE AND WHICH HAD A POLICY DIRECTED AGAINST THE MALTESE." THIS NEWSPAPER ARGUES THAT THE MALTESE WILL PANIC AND NOT GIVE UP THE BASE AS THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN UNDER SOMEBODY ELSE'S PROTECTION. MINTOFF ALSO ASSERTED THAT IF THE SOVIETS DECIDED TO ATTACK MALTA, THE WEST WILL SURELY DEFEND MALTA, NOT TO SAFEGUARD MALTA'S INTERESTS BUT TO SAFEGUARD THEIR OWN.
(C) MINTOFF STRESSED THAT EUROPE SHOULD PROVIDE THE GUARANTEE THAT MALTA WAS SEEKING BECUASE IT WAS IN THEIR OWN INTEREST JUST AS IT IS IN THE ARABS' INTEREST. ITALY WOULD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VALLET 00230 151606Z

NOT LIKE MALTA TO BECOME A LIBYAN BASE AND LIBYA'S MAJOR JALLUD TOLD VISITING MALTESE MP'S THAT LIBYA DOES NOT WANT TO SEE MALTA JOIN AN "OPPOSITE CAMP" AND WILL DO ITS UTMOST TO OPPOSE THIS. THEREFORE, IT IS "UP TO MALTA TO CHOOSE A NEUTRAL POSITION."
(D) MINTOFF CLAIMED THAT THE NATIONALIST (OPPOSITION) POLICY WAS INADEQUATE. WHILE AGREEING THAT MALTESE SECURITY SHOULD NOT DEPEND ON A FOREIGN MILITARY PRESENCE, THE NATIONALISTS WANT "A (SECURITY) AGREEMENT WITH THOSE COUNTRIES WITH WHICH MALTA SHARES IDEAS AND IDEALS". THIS IS NOT REALISTIC FOR MALTA AS EVEN THE UNITED STATES, "THE MIGHTIEST POWER ON EARTH", CANNOT AFFORD TO ENTRUST ITS SECURITY ONLY TO COUNTRIES WITH THE SAME IDEOLOGY. "CARTER HIMSELF, DESPITE HIS TALKS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, HAD TO BACK DOWN AND DECLARE FOR SECURITY REASONS THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL EXTEND ITS HELP TO SOME COUNTRIES DESPITE WHAT THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD MIGHT BE." IN FACT, THE NATIONALIST PARTY PLAN "AMOUNTS TO NOTHING."
(E) MINTOFF CONCLUDED BY ASSERTING THAT THE EUROPEANS WERE STILL TREATING THE MALTESE "LIKE SERVANTS" BECAUSE "SOMEONE WAS TELLING THEM THAT, COME WHAT MAY, MALTA WILL STILL BE TIED TO THE WEST". IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, MALTA

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

STANDS UP TO THE EUROPEANS AND TELLS THEM THAT "WE ARE AS EUROPEAN AS YOU ARE", THEN THE EUROPEANS WILL TREAT MALTA DIFFERENTLY.

2. COMMENT: MINTOFF'S REMARKS CONTAIN THE CLEAREST STATEMENT OF HIS PERCEPTION OF LIBYA'S INTEREST IN MALTA THAT WE HAVE SEEN RECENTLY. WE NOTE THAT ONCE AGAIN HE HAS AVOIDED THREATS AND IF ANYTHING SEEMS TO BE EXTENDING THE DEADLINE FOR A FINAL DECISION ON MALTA'S "CHOSEN PATH" TO 1979 AND BEYOND. HE DID NOT EXPLAIN, HOWEVER, HOW KEEPING MALTA'S OPTIONS OPEN SQUARES WITH HIS VIEWS ON MALTA'S REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE, WHICH HE LINKS EXPLICITLY WITH HIS NEUTRALITY PROPOSALS. MINTOFF MADE NO DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE US DURING THE DEBATE, NOR
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

WAS THERE ANY APPARENT INDIRECT SUGGESTION THAT THE US WAS INVOLVED IN EUROPE'S POSTURE TOWARD MALTA. LAINGEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, INDEPENDENCE, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978VALLET00230
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780070-1085
Format: TEL
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780250/aaaabqfn.tel
Line Count: 138
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 05cff2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 78 VALLETTA 149
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3582038
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF ON MALTESE FOREIGN POLICY
TAGS: PEPR, MT
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/05cff2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014